(a) whether any memorandum or request has been received by Government to merge Braithwaite and Co. Ltd. (B.C.L.) with Railways;

(b) if so, the steps taken, so far, in this regard; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes. Sir.

(b) As announced by Hon'ble Minister of Railways in her budget speech of 2009-10, process is being initiated for transfer wagon units of Burn Standard and Braithwaite & Co. Ltd. (BCL) to MOR. A dialogue has already been started with concerned Ministry for waiver of accumulated liabilities of Burn Standard Co. Ltd. and inter ministerial discussion for transfer of BCL shall be started soon.

(c) Does not arise.

Unused railway land

†849.SHRI PRABHAT JHA:
SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE:
Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Railways have additional land that remains unused;

(b) if so, the details of available land, throughout the country, State-wise;

(c) whether Government proposes to bring such land under use for other activities or commercial purpose;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the steps Government is taking to save unused land from encroachment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (e) Details are being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Connecting Udhampur with Qazigund

850. PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a plan to connect Udhampur with Qazigund in Kashmir by the Railways; and

(b) if so, by when the plan would be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Udhampur-Katra (25 km.) portion is targeted to be completed by December, 2011, The alignment between Katra-Qazigund is under review and an Expert Committee appointed to study

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

the issues involved has recently submitted its report. The matter is under consideration of the Ministry. The target for this portion will be fixed once the decision on the alignment is finalised.

Facilities in AC-3 tier trains

851. SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any proposal to put curtains in 3 tier AC;

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard;

(c) by when this proposal would be implemented in each train; and

(d) the other facilities being considered to put in AC-3 tier trains like Rajdhani?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) All new AC-3 Tier coaches are being provided with curtains in aisles, besides curtains on the windows which were already provided. Existing AC-3Tier coaches on the Zonal Railways shall also be provided with curtains in the aisles in a phased manner.

(d) From the considerations of coach design and passenger amenities, AC-3 Tier coaches are similar whether used in Rajdhani services or other trains.

Gauge conversion

852. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have prescribed some norms for approving the gauge conversion work after completion of its survey works;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of railway lines for which proposals have been received from the Government of Andhra Pradesh and South Central Railway; and

(d) the time-frame fixed for completing the works?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) The norms for taking up gauge conversion projects are as under:

i) To take up conversion of lines to develop alternative Broad Gauge (BG) routes obviating the need for doubling existing BG lines on these routes.

ii) To establish new BG links between stations connected by other BG lines.

iii) To establish BG connection to ports, industrial centres and locations having potential for growth;